



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

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NEWS AND EVENTS

- **Call for Applications for the U.S. EPA National Environmental Leadership Award in Asthma Management.** New this Year – EPA will honor a school-based asthma management program under the [Communities in Action](#) category. [Learn more!](#)
- **Access the High Performance Products Database.** This [database](#) provides information on products available that help schools meet Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) and other green building criteria, and deliver environmental and health benefits to their occupants. The database is offered by the CHPS in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and California’s Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).
- **Attend the Third Annual Green Schools National Conference.** This [conference](#) will be held February 22-24, 2013, in West Palm Beach, FL, and will be hosted by the Green Schools National Network. At the conference, you’ll be able to connect and engage with like-minded and passionate education, non-profit, corporate and public sector individuals and organizations. Representatives from EPA will be attending the conference to promote the [IAQ Tools for Schools guidance](#) and share information on how to develop and sustain comprehensive healthy school indoor environments programs. [Register Today!](#)

Did You Know ...

Students and staff spend more time indoors during the **colder months**.

Take time this winter to [conduct assessments](#) of your school’s classrooms, gym facilities, kitchens and other high occupancy areas.

Access Previous Connector E-Newsletters Online

Can’t find a previous *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter in your email inbox? No problem! Visit the [e-newsletter archive](#) on the *IAQ Tools for Schools* website to access printable versions (PDFs) of all past editions.

Should we have our schools tested for radon? How do we keep mold from returning once it has been removed?

Find answers to these and other questions on the Schools IAQ Connector Email Discussion List. **Join today** by sending a blank email message to schools_iaq_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov. Then check your email inbox for confirmation and membership details.

BASIC FACTS ON “GOING GREEN” AND EFFECTIVE CLEANING

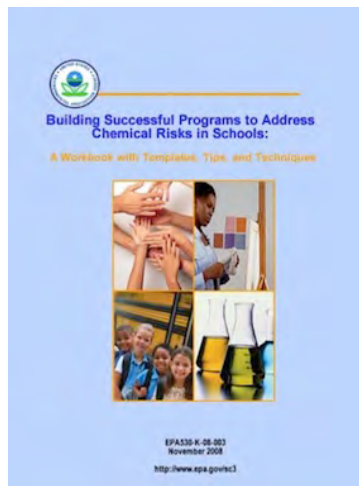


Effective cleaning practices are a critical part of a [comprehensive IAQ management program](#), as they protect building systems and the health of building occupants. Improper use of chemicals and cleaning products can have harmful effects on students, teachers and staff. To ensure that your school's classrooms, common areas and hallways stay clean and safe, consider implementing [green cleaning practices](#).

Green cleaning involves the use of products and services that [reduce negative health and environmental impacts](#) compared with other products and services used for the same purpose. Green cleaning practices reduce exposure to harmful indoor air pollutants, while effectively removing biological and other contaminants from the building's interior.

Green Cleaning Resources to Help You Get Started

- Access EPA's *IAQ Tools for Schools* [resources on environmentally preferable cleaning products](#) to learn how school districts can use the least toxic cleaning products as possible, and how to select products that have attained third-party certification. Following this guidance will ensure that a school's cleaning products will perform well, are cost-effective, and are safer for the environment. Common third-party programs are: [EPA's Design for the Environment](#), [Green Seal](#) (U.S.), and [EcoLogo](#) (Canadian).
- Access [EPA's Toolkit for Safe Chemical Management in K-12 Schools](#) to learn how to remove unnecessary chemicals from your school, prevent future chemical mismanagement and raise awareness about chemical issues.



- [Download The Quick & Easy Guide to Green Cleaning in Schools](#). This publication, released by the Healthy Schools Campaign, presents five easy steps to a greener, healthier environment for students, faculty and staff.
- View a presentation on [green cleaning products and practices](#) given by Rock Whitney, Director for Facility Support at North East Independent School District (NEISD) at the 2011 *IAQ Tools for Schools* National Symposium, and learn about NEISD's green cleaning strategies and successes.
- Read the [Indoor Air Quality Manual](#) (PDF) from the School Board of Broward County, Florida, to learn how this district tailored the *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance, including effective cleaning and maintenance, to fit its individual challenges and needs.

TOP 3 FAQs ON PURCHASING GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS

Read the frequently asked questions (FAQs) below on purchasing green cleaning products to gain a clearer understanding of how to implement safe and effective cleaning procedures at your school.

Question #1: How can cleaning products affect the health of our school buildings' occupants?

- Cleaning products are released into the environment during normal use through evaporation of volatile organic components (VOC) and rinsing down the drain of residual product from cleaned surfaces, sponges, etc. Janitorial staff and others who perform cleaning can be exposed to concentrated cleaning products.
- Certain cleaning products can cause [health concerns](#) in exposed individuals, including skin and eye irritation.
- [Proper training and use of chemicals](#), including establishment of formal procedures on proper storage, handling and use, can greatly minimize or prevent exposure to concentrated cleaning products.

Question #2: What are the benefits of buying green cleaning products?

- Choosing less hazardous products that have positive environmental attributes (e.g., biodegradability, low toxicity, low VOC content, reduced packaging, low life cycle energy use) and taking steps to reduce exposure to cleaning products can minimize harmful impacts on custodial workers and building occupants. Implementing green cleaning policies can also improve IAQ, and reduce water and ambient air pollution while also ensuring removal of biological and other contaminants from the building's interior.
- Buying cleaners in reusable, reduced or recyclable packaging reduces packaging waste and transportation energy.
- Buying less hazardous cleaners may reduce disposal costs.

Question #3: What should we look for when purchasing green cleaning products?

- To evaluate which products offer the best value, it is important to take into account performance, price, availability, regulatory requirements and environmental impact. To learn more about how to make your purchasing decisions, visit <http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/cleaning.htm#what>.

GET ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector e-newsletter? Do you have suggestions for a webinar or e-newsletter feature, or do you have questions about a specific IAQ topic? If so, send us an email at IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

Share YOUR news and events! Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Connector e-newsletter. Email your news and events to IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com.

The *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance is a comprehensive resource designed to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ Tools for Schools* guidance at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools>.